

REMARKS

In this amendment, claims 5, 13-23, 80-86, 96, and 98-100 are pending. Claims 13, 18, 23, 82, and 99 are amended. Claims 14, 15, and 96 are canceled. Claim 13 is amended to incorporate the limitations of claims 14 and 15. Claim 82 is amended by incorporating some limitations that were previously incorporated into claim 83. Claims 18 and 23 are placed in independent form by incorporating the limitations of the independent claim and all intervening claims.

Objections

Claim 82 is amended to provide antecedent basis.

Rejection over Burdon et al. WO 00/21659

Claim 82 has been rejected as being anticipated by Burdon et al. WO 00/21659. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

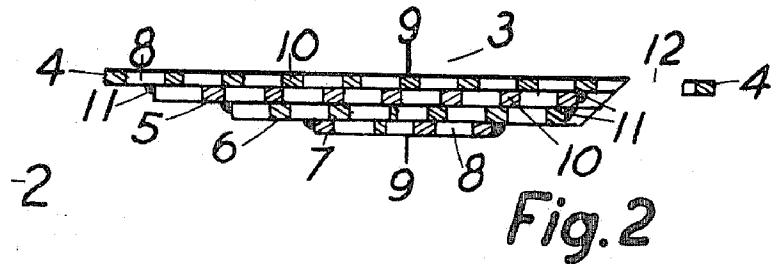
Claim 82 is not anticipated because the flow path in Fig. 14 of Burdon is a reaction chamber of unknown dimensions (with respect to the x axis and the dimension perpendicular to the page, as viewed in Fig. 14); and, therefore, Burdon et al. do not necessarily teach or suggest a “microchannel” flow path. Furthermore, claim 82 is now amended to recite “a metal film on the edge of the flow path that is substantially parallel to shim thickness,” which is clearly not taught or suggested in Burdon et al.

Rejection over Hirsch

Claims 13-17 and 96 have been rejected as being anticipated by Hirsch US 3,712,595.

This rejection is respectfully traversed. Claims 85, 99 and 100 are rejected as being obvious over Hirsch. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In the Office Action, it is argued that the invention of claim 13 is anticipated by Fig. 2 of Hirsch. Fig. 2 is shown below:



The entire description of Fig. 2 appears at col. 4, lines 43-57. Hirsch states that "Each of the openings 8 are quite larger in area than the metal stock 10 in between so that when stacking together a given ply cannot completely block the flow of vapor into the ply above."

Unlike the invention of claim 13, as amended, Hirsch does not teach or suggest the claimed feature "wherein the flow path in said at least three shims does not connect with any other flow paths." To the contrary, Hirsch shows a structure where the holes in adjacent plates are offset and teaches that "each of the openings are quite larger than the metal [between openings]". With Hirsch's structure, it is inevitable that flow paths will mix. Accordingly, the claimed invention is not obvious in view of Hirsch and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejection over Bottcher in view of “Partial Condenser”

Claims 13, 15, 85 and 100 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Bottcher in view of “Partial Condenser.”

Claim 13 has now been amended by incorporating the limitations of claim 14. Accordingly, this rejection is now moot.

Conclusion

If the Examiner has any questions or would like to speak to Applicants' representative, the Examiner is encouraged to call Applicants' attorney at the number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,

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